

## Supplemental Digital Appendix 1

### Character Development Strategy Blueprint

#### Southern Illinois University School of Medicine (SIUSOM) *Character Development Strategy Blueprint*

##### Overview

This character development strategy reflects the collaborative effort of MD- and PhD-trained medical educators, medical trainees, and patients. Designed using best practices in character education, this strategy aims to cultivate moral communities within our institution by (1) emphasizing a diversity of interactions, including mentoring conversations, small-group reflections, and panel discussions; and (2) engaging all types of institutional stakeholder, including patients, in the character development process. Using positive psychology's character strengths as a guiding framework, this strategy prioritizes and supports individualized character development based on a given stakeholder's personal aspirations, which are identified via reflective participation in moral communities.

##### Strategy Integrity

The strategy blueprint specifies goals for each character development activity. These activity goals reflect goals for *strategy elements*, rather than developmental goals for individuals, and they are intended for monitoring the strategy's integrity to its aims and design. That is, to merit the claim that this character development strategy is guided by positive psychology's character strengths framework and informed by best practices in character education, these activity goals must be met.

##### Individual Character Development

This strategy does not assume a specific "good" character or prioritize particular character strengths over others. Rather, this strategy assumes that cultivating a *balanced* character strength profile promotes flexibility in navigating one's personal experiences, leading to individual well-being, improved capacity to care for all patients, and engagement in transformational change to healthcare practice. In this strategy, character development requires engagement in moral communities via participation in character development activities involving all institutional stakeholders. Some activities in the blueprint are designed to offer recognition or space for individuals' character self-development ongoing in moral communities external to the institution. Participation in a given character development activity is not required. Rather, individuals must

participate in something, choosing activities based on their self-awareness of their character development trajectory. Facilitating this self-awareness is the portfolio, envisioned to help individuals gather their personal reflections and use them holistically to identify character strengths they wish to sustain and those they wish to develop further.

### Institutional Character Development

The portfolio also supports institutional character development by allowing institution-wide analysis of engagement in character development activities. Patterns of engagement may reflect moral community health, identify which activities are particularly effective in stimulating moral community, and indicate how the collection of character development activities can be refined to promote a balanced profile of character strengths among the institution as a whole.

### Structural/Contextual Notes

This character development strategy has been developed for a relatively small, community-based medical school situated in the Midwestern US. SIUSOM is situated in a state where engagement in equity work is not politically under threat, and the institution's leadership at all levels is dedicated to transformational change in healthcare practice. In addition, SIUSOM has been [recognized internationally for excellence](#) in several aspects of its educational environment and delivery, including social accountability and student engagement in the curriculum. To facilitate the growth of all institutional stakeholders, SIUSOM also has established the Center for Human and Organizational Potential ([cHOP](#)), whose mission is to "create an environment in which inclusive partnerships unleash the individual and organizational potential of our people and communities to learn, thrive and excel." In these and other respects, SIUSOM already has a culture conducive to holistic character development. Modifications to this blueprint likely will be needed to implement a similar character development strategy elsewhere. It is fully anticipated that modifications to this blueprint also will be needed to continuously update and enrich this character development strategy at SIUSOM in response to activity data and other stakeholder input.

Character Development Activity	Intended Participants	Description	Delivery	Portfolio Evidence	Incorporation of Patient Perspectives
Awakening to Your Character Strengths	Year 1 Students  Also, new: Faculty Staff Residents Fellows	Participants self-assess their character strengths using the Values in Action (VIA) Inventory, then discuss and reflect on their core character strengths in small groups  <u>Goal</u> : Moral community develops a shared a language for describing character strengths	This session could be embedded into new learner / new employee orientations.  For individuals new to the character strengths but not new to the institution, this introductory session could be integrated into other ongoing developmental activities, such as Residents as Teachers coursework, leadership coursework, medical education coursework, or as part of a regular meeting (e.g., a departmental or curriculum committee meeting).	Knowledge of the 24 Character Strengths  Reflection (any format—written, narrated orally, depicted artistically, etc.) documenting completion and discussion of the VIA	Discussion of the character strengths includes highlighting those that are of greatest concern to patients, comparing and contrasting with those valued by the medical profession
<a href="#">Values in Action (VIA) Inventory</a>	Students Faculty Staff Residents Fellows	This activity involves going online, taking the free version of the VIA, and recording the results  <u>Goal</u> : Achieve, institution-wide, a common language for talking about character and infusing generative character constructs into day-to-day discussions	For medical students, the VIA could be administered as part of ongoing progress assessments.  Administration of the VIA could occur as part of ongoing developmental events, such as faculty development workshops, modified to include character constructs as appropriate.	Recorded VIA results - i.e., the ordering of the individual's character strengths, highlighting existing and aspirational core strengths  Could include a prompted reflection (see above) on the individual's strengths (e.g., how they developed, their application to everyday life, and ideas for how to strengthen those lower on the list)  3 options for reflection: - Individual (any format) - Collaborative w/ an advisor	Reflection on the character strengths includes highlighting those that are of greatest concern to patients, comparing and contrasting with those valued by the medical profession

				- As part of an advising session specifically for discussing VIA progression	
Pre-clerkship Debriefs of Challenging Situations (in life and school)	Year 1 and Year 2 students	<p>Grand rounds, panel, or small-group format with Reflective group discussions about what happened and how different character strengths apply; Focus could be classroom, clinical, or life stories</p> <p><u>Goal:</u> Identification of how character strengths have been brought to bear on challenging situations in diverse ways with diverse outcomes</p>	<p>This voluntary session could be conducted in existing small-groups (e.g., problem-based learning tutorial groups) or as a large-group session akin to team-based learning.</p> <p>The debrief could be led by student affairs, faculty, staff, near-peers, other interested parties trusted by the participants to maintain psychological, educational, and identity safety.</p>	<p>Documentation of voluntary sessions attended</p> <p>Reflection (any format) on lessons learned from the sessions attended</p> <p>Documentation of contributing challenging situation stories to the sessions</p> <p>Documentation of leadership of a debrief session</p>	<p>Discussion of the situations includes highlighting character strengths of greatest concern to patients, comparing and contrasting with those valued by the medical profession</p>
Clerkship Debriefs of Challenging Situations (in life and school)	Year 3 Students	<p>Grand rounds, panel, or small-group format with Reflective group discussions about what happened and how different character strengths apply; Focus on clinical or life stories</p> <p><u>Goal:</u> Identification of how character strengths have been brought to bear on challenging situations in diverse ways with diverse outcomes</p>	<p>This voluntary session could be conducted in existing small-groups (e.g., clinical rotation cohorts) or as a large-group session akin to team-based learning.</p> <p>The debrief could be led by student affairs, faculty, staff, near-peers, other interested parties trusted by the participants to maintain psychological, educational, and identity safety.</p>	<p>Documentation of voluntary sessions attended</p> <p>Reflection (any format) on lessons learned from the sessions attended</p> <p>Documentation of contributing challenging situation stories to the sessions</p> <p>Documentation of leadership of a debrief session</p>	<p>Discussion of the situations includes highlighting character strengths of greatest concern to patients, comparing and contrasting with those valued by the medical profession</p>
Year 4 Debriefs of Challenging Situations (in life and school)	Year 4 Students	<p>Grand rounds, panel, or small-group format with Reflective group discussions about what happened and how different character strengths apply; Focus on clinical or life stories</p>	<p>This voluntary session could be conducted in existing small-groups (e.g., elective cohorts) or as a large-group session akin to team-based learning.</p>	<p>Documentation of voluntary sessions attended</p> <p>Reflection (any format) on lessons learned from the sessions attended</p>	<p>Discussion of the situations includes highlighting character strengths of greatest concern</p>

		<u>Goal</u> : Identification of how character strengths have been brought to bear on challenging situations in diverse ways with diverse outcomes	The debrief could be led by student affairs, faculty, staff, peers, other interested parties trusted by the participants to maintain psychological, educational, and identity safety.	Documentation of contributing challenging situation stories to the sessions  Documentation of leadership of a debrief session	to patients, comparing and contrasting with those valued by the medical profession
Workplace Debriefs of Challenging Situations (in life and at work)	Faculty Staff Residents Fellows	Grand rounds, panel, or small-group format with Reflective group discussions about what happened and how different character strengths apply; Focus on clinical or life stories  <u>Goal</u> : Identification of how character strengths have been brought to bear on challenging situations in diverse ways with diverse outcomes	This voluntary session could be conducted in existing small-groups (e.g., clinical service teams) or as a large-group session akin to team-based learning.  The debrief could be led by human resources, peers, or other interested parties trusted by the participants to maintain psychological, educational, and identity safety.	Documentation of voluntary sessions attended  Reflection (any format) on lessons learned from the sessions attended  Documentation of contributing challenging situation stories to the sessions  Documentation of leadership of a debrief session	Discussion of the situations includes highlighting character strengths of greatest concern to patients, comparing and contrasting with those valued by the medical profession
Character Development Strategizing	Students Faculty Staff Residents Fellows	Brainstorming the design, development, and implementation of our character development strategy to keep it continuously refreshed and aligned with participants' and the patient community's evolving interests  <u>Goal</u> : Engage all members of the institution as well as patients in character development	This voluntary activity could serve as a quality improvement project option. Participants will have to have taken the Values in Action (VIA) Inventory.	Documentation of significant intellectual contributions to the character development strategy (and their implementation, if applicable)  Documentation of scholarly productivity associated with involvement in this activity (e.g., workshops, panel discussions, posters, publications)	Developmental strategy ideas will be vetted for their alignment with community input.  Ideas could be vetted directly by patients or patients could be on the evaluation team.
Community Service	Students Faculty Staff Residents Fellows	Any kind of community service (clinical or non-clinical in nature)  <u>Goal</u> : Communicate the institution's value for community service and	This voluntary activity is not part of a service learning requirement or otherwise extrinsically motivated. This service is intrinsically	Documented participation in community service activities  Reflection (any format) on the character strengths involved in	Community service reflections will address the intended impact

		recognize individuals' character strengths reflected in such service (e.g., kindness, hope, love, mercy, etc.)	motivated and could be service that the individual is already engaged in (e.g., religious or civic organizations).	the service activity and its impact on oneself and others  Leadership in the organization, implementation, or sustainment of community service activities	on the community need.  Patients are asked for their perceptions of the impact and value of the community service activities.
Character Journey Grand Rounds	Students Faculty Staff Residents Fellows	Panel discussions comprise appreciative inquiries with faculty, staff, residents, fellows, students (including recent graduates), and patients reflecting on their character development journey  <u>Goal:</u> Communicate the institution's value for character strengths; Celebrate individual character journeys; Role model a reflective character development approach	Voluntary attendance, large-group format	Documentation of attendance  Brief reflection (any format) on insights gained from participation  Documented participation as a panelist	Panel discussion facilitator will highlight those character strengths discussed that are of greatest value to the community.  Panelists could choose patients to serve on the panel to discuss how that panelist's character strengths affected them or brought out their own character strengths.
Personal Character Strengths at Work Demonstration	Students Faculty Staff Residents Fellows	Session facilitator tells a case-based story to illustrate the applicability of character strengths not normally associated with health care work (e.g., creativity, perspective, awe)	Voluntary attendance, large- or small-group format, embedded in ongoing workplace case discussions (could include notional cases such as those used in problem-based learning tutorials)	Documentation of attendance  Brief reflection (any format) on insights gained from participation	Ideas for incorporating character strengths into the sessions could be vetted

		<u>Goal</u> : Demonstrate how/that character traits typically associated with personal life relate to work; Normalize discussion of character in traditionally technical settings and conversations		Documented participation as a facilitator	by a community member  Patients could participate in the session to discuss character strengths
<a href="#">Micro-adventures</a> "a short, simple, cheap, local version of an adventure"	Students Faculty Staff Residents Fellows	Various activities, including (but not limited to):  - "Awe walks" - touring the local area, taking pictures of noticings - Sleeping under the stars on a weeknight - Going geocaching - Taking a familiar walk or ride a bike in the dark - Becoming a backyard naturalist - Planning a food run (i.e., a progressive party) - Climbing a tree every month for a year - Riding a train or bus to the last stop and navigating one's way home - See also: <a href="https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/topic/awe/definition#how-cultivate-awe">https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/topic/awe/definition#how-cultivate-awe</a>  <u>Goal</u> : Stimulate everyday awe (and, as a result, joy and prosocial behavior); Communicate the institution's value for character strengths related to transcendence	Self-organized, voluntary participation; could be done individually or in groups	Documented participation  Documented reflection (any format) on the experience and insights gained  Participation as a microadventure guide	Patients could serve as guides in these microadventures
Character Website	Students Faculty Staff Residents	Includes a description of the character strengths and a link to the Values in Action Inventory; Provides an interactive space for people to	Website should not be difficult to access, such as requiring multiple secure logins	Documented contributions to the character website (e.g., design ideas, usability testing, web implementation,	Patients participate in virtual discussions and

	Fellows	<p>tell character stories; Announces character development opportunities; Hosts story slam videos (see below); Hosts the character podcast (see below)</p> <p><u>Goal</u>: Create a virtual gathering space for the moral community</p>		asynchronous discussion facilitator)	other online activities conducted on the website
Medical Student Character Interest Group	Students (all years)	<p>This student special interest group meets regularly to talk about positive psychology, character strengths, and personal growth beyond professionalism</p> <p><u>Goal</u>: Foster moral community development among students; Nurture a think tank for continuously improving the character development strategy</p>	Regular meetings, voluntary attendance	<p>Documented participation in the group</p> <p>Leadership of the group</p>	Patients could be included in the interest group meetings
Story Slam	Students Faculty Staff Residents Fellows	<p>This activity provides an opportunity for all institutional stakeholders to tell personal stories that express their character</p> <p><u>Goal</u>: Stimulate creativity and perspective; Foster moral community development among all institutional stakeholders; Normalize seeing character strengths as applicable to people's personal experiences; Communicate the institution's value for character strengths</p>	Annual Story Slam events (ideally with a reception and dialogue afterward), voluntary attendance	<p>Documented attendance</p> <p>Documented participation as a storyteller</p> <p>Documented reflection (any format) on the experience and insights gained from attendance or participation</p>	Patients could be included in the story slam
Character Podcast	Students Faculty Staff Residents Fellows	<p>This activity provides an opportunity for all institutional stakeholders to have open-ended discussions about the diversity of character expression without there being a "right"</p>	Podcast could be hosted on the Character Website and potentially made available more widely (e.g., Spotify)	<p>Documented listening</p> <p>Documented participation as a guest</p>	Patients could be included in the podcast



		<p>answer. The podcast format makes these discussions available 24/7, to be listened to as time permits.</p> <p><u>Goal:</u> Foster moral community development among all institutional stakeholders; Communicate the institution's value for character strengths; Cultivate openness to the diversity of ways character can be expressed; Create a safe space for wrestling with the ambiguity in character expression; Role model a reflective character development process</p>	<p>Listening is voluntary, but could provide a stimulus for informal group discussions</p>	<p>Documented participation as a host</p> <p>Documented reflection (any format) on the experience and insights gained from listening or participation</p>	
Character Newsletter	Students Faculty Staff Residents Fellows	<p>This is a monthly email highlighting a particular character strength and its application or demonstration (e.g., in current events, in an employee's actions). The newsletter would also notify recipients of upcoming character development activities and report on ones that have already taken place.</p> <p><u>Goal:</u> Foster moral community development among all institutional stakeholders; Communicate the institution's value for character strengths; Celebrate individual character journeys; Achieve, institution-wide, a common language for talking about character and infusing generative character constructs into day-to-day discussions</p>	<p>Mass email; individuals can opt out of the listserv</p>	<p>Documented engagement with the email (e.g., becoming a writer, submitting a story, nominating a person to be recognized)</p> <p>Documented reflection (any format) on the experience and insights gained from reading or participating in the email</p>	<p>The newsletter could include patients on the mailing list and feature community member's requests, stories, and nominations</p>
Character Posters	Students Faculty Staff	<p>Posters highlighting a particular character strength and its application or demonstration (e.g.,</p>	<p>Posters appear in multiple buildings around campus and could be designed in concert</p>	<p>Documented engagement with the poster (e.g., participating in</p>	<p>The posters could be placed in campus</p>

	Residents Fellows	<p>in current events, in an employee's actions).</p> <p><u>Goal:</u> Foster moral community development among all institutional stakeholders; Communicate the institution's value for character strengths; Celebrate individual character journeys; Achieve, institution-wide, a common language for talking about character and infusing generative character constructs into day-to-day discussions</p>	with the character newsletter, providing another way of accessing the same news	graphic design, putting posters up)	<p>buildings, such as clinical areas, that patients visit</p> <p>If designed in concert with the character newsletters, the posters also could include community member's requests, stories, and nominations</p>
On-Demand Crucial Conversations about Character Growth	Students Faculty Staff Residents Fellows	<p>These sessions would involve working with a group—at the request of the group or the group's leadership—to discuss character strengths, their application, challenges, etc.</p> <p><u>Goal:</u> Foster moral community development among all institutional stakeholders; Communicate the institution's value for character strengths; Achieve, institution-wide, a common language for talking about character and infusing generative character constructs into day-to-day discussions</p>	<p>Arranged through an outside party recognized by stakeholders for advocacy (e.g., the Dean of Student Affairs, the Dean of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion)</p> <p>These conversations should be facilitated by people trained in the character strengths framework and knowledgeable about the character development activities offered by the institution</p>	<p>Documented participation in the conversation</p> <p>Documented reflection (any format) on the experience and insights gained from reading or participating in the conversation</p>	Discussions highlight character strengths of greatest concern to patients, comparing and contrasting with those valued by the medical profession
Character Strengths Practica	Students Faculty Staff Residents Fellows	These small-group discussions begin with a general <i>learning or work problem</i> and explore how developing certain character strengths can improve the situation (example – problem is ineffective teamwork on service; group troubleshoots how humility, fairness, perspective, judgment, and	These could be pop-up sessions based on identified need, arranged through an outside party recognized by stakeholders for advocacy (e.g., the Dean of Student Affairs, the Dean of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion)	<p>Documented participation in the discussion</p> <p>Documented reflection (any format) on the experience and insights gained from reading or participating in the discussion</p>	Patients can provide input on topic selection

		<p>social intelligence can be brought to bear)</p> <p><u>Goal</u>: Foster moral community development among all institutional stakeholders; Communicate the institution's value for character strengths; Achieve, institution-wide, a common language for talking about character and infusing generative character constructs into day-to-day discussions</p>			
Creative Engagement	Students Faculty Staff Residents Fellows	<p>Encourage, provide space, and recognize engagement in creative acts to express oneself, solve problems, have fun, and share joy</p> <p><u>Goal</u>: Foster moral community development among all institutional stakeholders; Communicate the institution's value for character strengths; Celebrate individual character journeys</p>	<p>Activities could be in any format, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Contributing to a school literary magazine</li> <li>- Publishing in a medical humanities journal</li> <li>- Publishing personal narratives, memoirs, poetry, art, music, podcasts, etc. outside of academic medicine</li> <li>- Contributing to a school talent show</li> <li>- Participating in a climate change solutions contest</li> <li>- Participating in a QI contest</li> <li>- Organizing a walking group or other meetup</li> <li>- Use of unconventional meeting openers (e.g., singing, meditation, gratitude stories)</li> </ul>	<p>Documentation of participation in creative activities</p> <p>A record of the creative product</p> <p>Documented leadership in organizing a creative activity</p> <p>Documented service to creative activities</p> <p>Documented reflection (any format) on the experience and insights gained from participation</p>	<p>Patients can serve on the selection panel for school creative outlets (e.g., literary magazine judges)</p> <p>Patients can be invited to participate in school creative outlets</p>
Character Strengths Infusion	Students Faculty Staff	Presentation and discussion of relevant character strengths, as	Embedded into ongoing developmental activities, including:	Documented participation in the session	Discussions highlight character

	Residents Fellows	<p>appropriate, as part of other ongoing developmental activities</p> <p><u>Goal</u>: Communicate the institution's value for character strengths; Achieve, institution-wide, a common language for talking about character and infusing generative character constructs into day-to-day discussions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Problem-based learning case discussions</li> <li>- Faculty and staff development offerings</li> <li>- Residents as Teachers programs</li> <li>- Leader development programs</li> <li>- Wellness programs</li> </ul>	<p>Documented involvement in facilitating a session</p> <p>Documented reflection (any format) on the experience and insights gained from participating in or facilitating the session</p>	<p>strengths of greatest concern to patients, comparing and contrasting with those valued by the medical profession</p>
Spiritual Space	Students Faculty Staff Residents Fellows	<p>Various activities demonstrate encouragement and support for all institutional stakeholders to nurture their spiritual side and connection to their spiritual practice</p> <p><u>Goal</u>: Communicate the institution's value for character strengths, including transcendence strengths</p>	<p>Coordinate with the hospital chaplain and spiritual leaders outside the institution to design programs that provide spiritual encouragement and counseling using a non-denominational framework</p> <p>Spiritually inclined institutional stakeholders can create interest groups exploring spirituality in medicine, wellbeing, and coping with grief, among other things</p> <p>Facilitate observance of all religious holidays via inclusive religious leave policies</p>	<p>Documented use of spiritual space</p> <p>Documented participation in creating a spiritual space</p> <p>Documented reflection (any format) on the experience and insights gained from participation in or creation of space</p>	<p>Discussions within the institutional spiritual space include consideration of patient wishes for physician spirituality in their medical care</p>